CROSSPIECE



The Parish Magazine of St James's Church, Cambridge

August — September 2016

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Moonrise over the Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits, see p7 for article.

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Words from the Revd Deborah Ford: "Proud to be British?"

A couple of years ago, I became a fully-fledged British Citizen. Having lived here from the age of two, I already felt myself to be one, but that was not the way the increasingly suspicious and oppressive bureaucratic/nationalistic systems and border controls seemed to see it.

One of the things that had put me off doing it sooner was the introduction of the renowned 'British Citizenship Test'. No mean feat – even for someone like me. But, after a random series of questions about various dimensions of what makes Britain Britain, I learned that I had somehow managed to pass. 'My' questions included: 'Is it true or false that if you have a pet dog in the UK, it must have a tag with its name & address on when it is out in public?'; 'What is the maximum amount of money that can be claimed for in a Civil Court?"; 'How many members are there on a Scottish jury?' (There were ones about Boadicea and Bonnie Prince Charlie, too). I was then invited to attend a British Citizenship Ceremony: to pledge an oath of allegiance to the Queen; promise that I would be a good British Citizen and sing the national anthem – for which there was yet another exorbitant fee. But that was it: I am now as British as the British (if not more).



The Brexit decision means that we are all suddenly faced with what it means to be British: who are we? What do we really value and uphold as a society? And why?

Whether we recognise it or not, the values of Christianity (shaped and influenced by many things over time) - wisdom, compassion, mercy, justice, truth, peace, hope, reconciliation, generosity, forgiveness etc. - are deeply embedded and balanced in all sorts of ways and institutions in society that are *good*.

But the corruption of the best is always the worst: and part of our humanity is that however much capacity and inclination we have for the best, we also have the capacity to distort, corrupt, blame and deceive. Just look at how our freedom of speech or the freedom of the press can be used to humiliate and cultivate lies and fear, rather than to build up and speak the truth in love. Or how the almost automatic default when something goes wrong is: 'Who's to blame?' Or how quick we are to turn in on ourselves and forget the other more urgent crises going on in the wider world.... (When did we last have a headline about the millions starving and on the brink of death in the Sudan?).

We can't do things in our own strength: however hard we try. It's not the way we're wired – we *need* to be saved from ourselves and we need a God who will save us! And God is right here in our midst offering... "Yet even now, says the Lord 'Return to me, with all your heart." (Joel 2:12)

So in this time of uncertainty and change, let's pray for renewal – that we, the British, might rediscover the living, loving God at the heart of all we are and do.

Debbie

Newest member of the congregation

Baby Avanna Berry, who regularly attends the 10am service with her parents Siobhan and Isaiah, was baptised by Revd. Ally Barrett at St James' on the afternoon of 17th July.

St James' are delighted to welcome Avanna and her family to the congregation and look forward to supporting her growth in the Christian faith. We also pray for Siobhan who will be baptised at St James' in the 10am service on 7th August.

Max's Ordination

On 26th June 2016 around forty members of the St James' congregation attended Max Drinkwater's ordination as deacon at St Edmundsbury cathedral. This was followed by refreshments at St Agnes Newmarket, a small but elaborately decorated Victorian church in the parish in which he will be working as a curate.

Pictures clockwise from top left: Max

and Charlotte in the cathedral gardens; the Bishop with his favoured reading matter; Max with Bishop Martin; and Italian-style mosaics in St Agnes Newmarket.











My faith journey by Michael Smale

I was born into a non-churchgoing family. So far as I know my father never went and my mother always said that she found God in nature rather than in conventional religion. Nevertheless they would have called themselves C of E, had us all baptised and sent us all to Sunday School.

I actually enjoyed Sunday School. I found theological ideas interesting and got involved in thinking about contradictions in the Bible. My Sunday School teacher challenged me to

explain what I found difficult but I never really took up the challenge, I think from lack of confidence. One thing really did stay with me: when I left Sunday School my teacher took me up to Foyles in London and bought me a very nice copy of *Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan. I think it was the first beautifully produced book I had ever had and I was deeply impressed by the theological images, such as the Slough of Despond. For those of you who are unfamiliar with it, Pilgrim's Progress is a 17th century allegorical story of a Christian's journey through life told as a physical journey to the Celestial City in which all the obstacles he meets are metaphors for the spiritual obstacles a Christian has to overcome. So the Slough of Despond is a boggy swamp made of all the doubts, fears, temptations, guilts and shames that we are all heirs to.

That was the end of my spiritual development for some years. At 16 I was confirmed because it seemed to be the thing that was expected by my school. But I never even started going to church, in fact I think I was distinctly hostile to the idea. Nevertheless an interest in theology, ethics and religion revived in my late teens and early twenties and has never left me since. I read extensively. C. S. Lewis's books were very important – I found his image of heaven as more real than our mundane reality very powerful. The grass was so real – so sharp and hard - that anyone who was unprepared could not bear its reality. The historical truth of the Bible was also important to me, e.g. 'Who moved the stone' by Frank Morison, and 'How the Bible Came to us' by H.



G. Herklots. More broadly I William found James's *'Varieties* Religious of Experience' fascinating. He examines the whole range of ways in which people come to apprehend God. Of all these ways I found mysticism the most persuasive of God's existence because it claims direct experience of God and is a common core of all religions. But all this reading did not make me go to church or commit as a Christian.

Eventually Mary and I got married. Mary was a churchgoer and so I went occasionally, but more to keep her company than

for any sense of commitment. On one such occasion we had been invited to lunch with the vicar and his wife. Mary and I arrived in their backyard and I spotted a football. Beneath the dining room window was a beautiful rectangle of wall just waiting to be targeted. I kicked the ball and it hit smack in the middle of the wall under the window. I was so gratified by this success I did it again. This time it went straight through the window! However we remained friends and when our daughter, Ally, was ordained Simon gave her his father's silver pyx. So I think he had forgiven me.

When the children were born Mary took them to church from the start and this made me feel a bit guilty that she was having to manage them by herself. However when they got to the age of about 7 they started asking, 'Why doesn't Daddy come to church?' Clearly I had to decide which path I was going to follow. I felt like Christian in Pilgrim's Progress. If I said, 'Oh, I'm not a Christian, I don't believe in all that.' I would undermine all that Mary had been doing, and I might jeopardise the children's nascent faith. In any case what was all my reading for? Oughtn't it to lead somewhere? So I started going to church regularly, not because I believed but rather so that I might come to Since then I have had no sudden illumination, no road to Damascus experience, but I have been quite heavily involved in church life and gradually certain convictions have grown in me.

Most of the time I do believe in God's existence. I'm convinced that Jesus did live and

(Continued on page 5)

that he died and rose again. I don't think either of these can be 'proved' but I find the experiences of those who have had direct spiritual knowledge of the divine very persuasive. I do believe that Christianity, when it takes account of all the knowledge of the world and ourselves that we have gained, gives us the best handle on understanding where we stand in the world and in life, and how best to conduct ourselves.

I do believe that Christianity is about being in a community. I'm very aware of the ways in which religion can be perverted to persecute those who are not quite the same as ourselves, and I could only belong happily to a liberal and inclusive church.

In arriving at these convictions individuals have been important — Simon Bannister whose window I broke, Derek Tilston in whose home Mary and I met, John Hansford the head of Bury Grammar School when I was a young teacher, and Mary herself. I am still harassed by doubts and I find praying very difficult but that sort of thing is, I suppose, inevitable if one is a work in progress.

Concert review: U3AC Madrigal Group

Without decrying its other many and varied institutions, Cambridge is primarily a city of higher education. We have the University of Cambridge with its Colleges and Departments, Anglia Ruskin University, the Theological Colleges, the Further Education Colleges and the Language Schools. But hold on, somewhere not at the end of that list is the University of the 3rd Age in Cambridge! The U3AC has no manicured grassy courts but instead some forty or so venues scattered around Cambridge. This year it has nearly three thousand students comparing significantly with Cambridge University's thirteen thousand. Its curriculum lists an impressive 343 topics from Abstract Art through New Testament Greek to a Writers' Workshop.

In the middle of the curriculum list is Mainly Madrigals, led by one of the Crosspiece editors, Jennifer Day. This group of twenty or so singers meets weekly in the music room at the Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs in Cambridge over two terms to sing madrigals

(unaccompanied music of the 16th and 17th Centuries). To end their 2015/16 meetings they put on the performance 'A musical entertainment for a Summer's Evening' at St James' on 6th July in aid of the Cambridge refugee resettlement campaign. The well-presented programme was preceded by a talk explaining the work carried out by the refugee resettlement campaign. Then we were treated to three groups of madrigals appropriate to a summer evening, including 'Fair Phyllis' by John Farmer, 'Weep, O mine eyes' by John Bennett and 'The Silver Swan' by Orlando Gibbons.

Thank you Jennifer and Singers for a pleasant and entertaining evening, which also raised £230 for the refugee resettlement programme.

Ron Ferrari

More information about the Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign can be found at <u>cam-bridgerefugees.org</u>

Hospital chaplaincy volunteering

"Have you a few hours to spare a week? Do you like meeting people, listening to their stories and encouraging them on their spiritual journey?"

Addenbrooke's Hospital Chaplaincy Department is looking for additional volunteers who would like to help with its ministry to patients and staff. This can involve adopting a particular ward and visiting the patients there on a weekly basis. Alternatively, volunteers may join a rota to take Holy Communion to and/or pray with patients at their bedside on a Sunday morning, if they are not able to attend the chapel service.

A ten week training course for Lay Visitors, run by the Chaplaincy Department, will start on 14th September 2016. Please speak to Debbie Ford or contact the Chaplaincy Administrator (01223 217769, chaplaincy@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) for more information.

A description of hospital volunteering can also be found in Rosemary Monk's faith story, published in Crosspiece April-May 2015 and available on the St James' website.

Challenging Scripture - a reader's request and response

The Crosspiece team welcome requests or suggestions for articles. The following letter from Ian Rowland was inspired by Geoffrey Howard's article on the ten commandment in Crosspiece for October-November 2015 (available in the Crosspiece archive on the St James' website). A response from Geoffrey follows.

Reader's request

A little while ago you published a contribution from Geoffrey Howard about an uncomfortable verse in the Ten Commandments. My thought was: I hope that the compilers of the lectionary will continue to include difficult passages so that wise theologians such as Geoffrey can expound them to their congregations. Might we hope for a *Crosspiece* article or a sermon to clarify the difference between Joshua knocking down the walls of Jericho and Hitler's Blitzkrieg on Poland, or the blatantly racist book of Ezra?

More recently I have heard a sermon in which Geoffrey did speak of Ezra. I do not know when next the fall of Jericho will appear in the lectionary or who will be preaching. I hope to learn why one nation's violent conquest has so often been accepted while another's has not.

Response from Revd. Geoffrey Howard

You have asked for a clarification of the difference between genocide in Joshua's time and in our own time. My conviction is that genocide is genocide wherever and whenever it occurs. It was horrific under Hitler, it was equally horrific under Joshua and indeed he may well have compounded his offense by involving God. Did Hitler ever co-opt God to justify his crimes?

I had a few surprises on Googling *The Fall* of Jericho. The first was that there are still a lot of people, including ordained clergy, who believe every word of the narrative: the march around the city, the blowing of the trumpets and the collapse of the city walls, which archaeologists have discovered were of massive proportions. Those who take this story literally claim that archaeological evidence supports the biblical text. Modern archaeology writes a Wayne Blank, has verified every word of the Bible account, right from the fallen walls to the ashes of stored grain. Someone else claims there is evidence that the harlot Rahab's house, which was spared from the wholesale destruction, may still be standing! Apart from Garstang, who in the 30's excavated

the site and dated his findings to the Joshua period, it is difficult to discover other archaeologists who share Blank's confident assertion. A reexcavation by Kathleen Kenyon in the 50's dated the destruction of the walls earlier and attributed it to a well-attested Egyptian campaign. Later radiocarbon tests in the 90's have pushed the date farther back still. Dever, an archaeologist, a specialist in Biblical sites and times, concluded that the Biblical story cannot have been founded on genuine historical sources. With regard to this, it is worth bearing in mind that most Biblical scholars are now convinced that the early Biblical stories were transmitted by word of mouth for several centuries before they were given literary form, and in the process they were often richly embroidered. It is therefore reasonably certain that the Jericho story, although based on an actual event, does not tell the same tale as an eyewitness would have told it.

Another Google surprise was that many of the conservative commentators, including the Bible notes of the Intervarsity Fellowship, make no mention of the genocide. It does seem something of a hot potato. One who does mention it has this to say: This annihilation of even the animals and children has troubled many, but it was not an uncommon practice in ancient wars. More importantly, God as the giver of life has the authority to take it, and in the invasion of Canaan He charged His people to eliminate everything, not because Israel was intrinsically holy but because the pagans of Canaan earned it. (How, I wonder, did the children and innocent animals earn it? And would he whom Christians believe is God-incarnate and the lover of little children have approved of this dirty work?)

Yet many sermons have been preached on this incident and many Christians and Jews have been inspired and encouraged by it. This, as with many difficult passages of the Bible, has been achieved for the most part by allegorising the story. What it is concerned with, such preachers might say, is the apparently insuperable obstacles in the path of those seeking to follow Christ and do God's will. When you encounter such obstacles, do not despair. Pray and praise – get the trumpet out – and almighty God will enable you to surmount them. As for the animals and children, these represent your sins. They must be treated ruthlessly. There must be no sparing

them, even the little apparently innocent ones must be done to death. Although this is a time-honoured way, often imaginative and inspiring, of exploring a text, it may also be a means of evading its difficulties.

These ancient, blood-thirsty stories recorded in a sacred book seem to me to give rise to two dangers: one is created by those who implicitly believe them to be the inerrant word of God and the other problem is created by those, like myself, who find them unacceptable. The first danger is that such stories may be used to justify similar actions now. Am I being unjust, even anti-Semitic, in fearing that orthodox Jews in Israel find some justification in stories like these for their treatment of Arabs? I am amazed that there are Jews, some of whom have survived the Holocaust or lost many relatives in the gas chambers, who give credence and approval

to such stories.

The other danger is that we may pride ourselves on our superiority over those ancient, ignorant, misguided Jews. If so, we are deluding ourselves. Our own country is not guiltless. On the brink of the ending of the Second World War British and American planes dropped tons of incendiary bombs on Dresden, an ancient city of culture, at a time when it was full of refugees fleeing the Russian armies. We turned Dresden into a gigantic fireball and reduced it to a lifeless pile of rubble. Jericho pales into insignificance before it. And what can we do but weep when confronted by Hiroshima and Nagasaki? On the Day of Judgment Hitler and Joshua may well stand side by side, but they will not stand alone.

Focus Christian Institute

The Focus Christian Institute was a strong part of St James' history, providing Christian education courses for adults. It has been dormant for some time, but is now being revived, with the first new course planned for Autumn 2016.

Former Regius Professor of Divinity David Ford will lead the first course on "The Gospel of John for Today", with Tuesday evening sessions on "Learning to read the Gospel of John", "Learning to pray the Gospel of John", "Learning to live the Gospel of John" and "Learning to be a Community", followed by a Saturday workshop. The evening sessions will comprise 45 minutes of teaching followed by 45 minutes of group discussions.

Look out for more information on dates and booking arrangements over the summer.

Chalk and Cheese

"Chalk and Cheese" was the title of an event run by the Wildlife Trust on 18th July at Cherry Hinton Chalk Pits. They are within our parish, and are actually three sites: Limekiln Close, East Pit and West Pit. They were all once limestone quarries, though work ceased at the first site many years ago. At East Pit it was more recent, and the Wildlife Trust took over what was a white moonscape just a few years ago.

It was a beautiful balmy evening as twelve of us gathered at East Pit (you enter through large iron gates at the bottom of Limekiln Hill). It is quite a large area of chalk cliffs with level footpaths encircling the base and ladders at the far end to get up higher if you wish. We were taken round, learning about the geology of the area, the Iron Age settlement on the hill that existed before quarrying, and the wildflowers

that had reappeared of their own accord and in different phases. The moon carrot is found at only three sites in the UK.

After the tour we gathered for wine and cheese while the cliffs turned from rosy colours in the setting sun to ghostly silvery white as a full moon rose. As dusk fell we were given bat detectors and managed to locate some pipistrelles in different parts of the wooded Limekiln Close. When it was truly dark about 10.15 we came back to East Pit to look for glow-worms. And there they were, quite near the entrance! Little pinpoints of greenish light, just like LEDS. Glow-worms are actually beetles and it is the females who emit light to attract males. I had never seen them before and this rounded off an unusual evening almost on my doorstep.

Jennifer Day

But did you go to Christchurch? (Part 2)

Part 1 of this article, describing the earthquake damage to Christchurch in New Zealand, including the destruction of the Anglican Cathedral, was included in the previous issue of Crosspiece - available on the St James' website.

While the Anglican Church in New Zealand make up their minds about a permanent replacement for the cathedral, down the road several blocks away, its temporary replacement stands fine and beautiful. Christchurch Transitional Cathedral was built in 2013, designed by the architect Shigeru Ban and seating around 700 people. The site is on the corner of Hereford and Madras Streets in Latimer Square, on what was the site of St. John the Baptist Church which was demolished after the 2011 earthquake. Apparently the congregation of St. John's gave the land for the cathedral to be built, with the proviso that once a new cathedral is built they can keep the building, although this seems a long way off. Meanwhile they have use of the building.

Known as the 'Cardboard Cathedral', it is triangular in shape. It is built on a concrete slab and constructed of cardboard, wood and steel. Its roof is of polycarbon and its walls are made of metal shipping containers. Inside it is light, bright and airy, with a very modern look.

I was able to visit the Cathedral twice, once when we first arrived on the South Island as part of our tour, and then again 6 days later when I went to Evensong with a few friends on the last night of my visit to New Zealand. It was very special for us as it was our last evening, but the Dean and the churchwardens were very excited when they discovered where we came from, as was a young man who was also there from the UK.

The Cathedral has a feeling of new life and seems to breathe hope into the world of chaos just outside its doors. This is a quote from its website:

'Cathedrals usually stand as enduring monuments to human skill and inventiveness, and magnificent pointers to the presence of God among us. Their websites will tell you how they are the oldest, the largest, the tallest or the most significant of their kind.

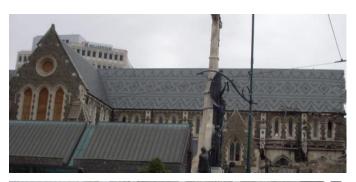
Christchurch Cathedral is slightly different. The original Cathedral was badly damaged in the Christchurch earthquake in February 2011. We are operating from our new temporary home, the Transitional Cathedral in Latimer Square, Christchurch. It is the world's only cathedral made substantially of cardboard.'

I found my visit truly inspiring and memorable, but I left with an empty feeling. It left me quite shocked that a city in a developed country could still be in such a condition, 5 years after the event. Several of my friends have been to New Zealand since the

earthquakes, and in all cases when they found out I had also been, they said 'and did you go to Christ-church'? When I replied yes, there was no answer; there was no need to say any more!

And finally, while in Christchurch we stayed in the suburb of Papanui and on the way to and from the restaurant where we ate both evenings, we passed the Anglican Church of St. Paul's. It was badly damaged in the earthquake but has since been restored. Both evenings it was lit and I just thought it looked peaceful and beautiful in this world of chaos.

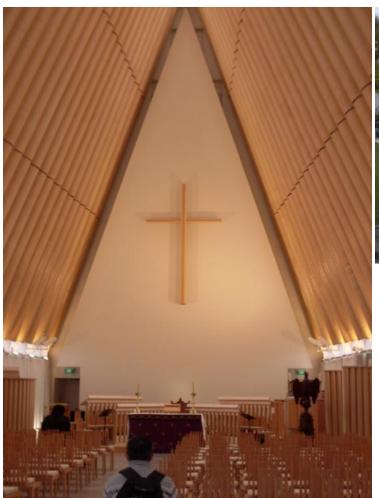
Pam Butler







Above: three views of the ruined cathedral





Above: City centre rebuilding

Left: Inside the transitional cathedral

Below: Stained glass in the transitional cathedral



St James' Day Celebrations

Bishop John Flack, former Bishop of Huntingdon, celebrated and preached at a joint 10 am Eucharist on 24th July for St James' Day. During the service we said farewell to David Rice, director of music. Later there was a bring and share lunch held jointly with the Chinese church.

Photos clockwise from right: some of the delicious food for lunch; Altar party including Bishop John; David Rice with the St James' banner.







Hymn for troubled times

This hymn was written by Revd Ally Barrett in June, in response to the shootings in Orlando. The suggested tune is 'Kings Lynn', associated with 'O God of earth and altar'.

O God of all salvation In this, our darkest hour, Look down at your creation With pity and with power. In all the pain we're seeing, For parent, partner, friend, We'll cling with all our being To love that cannot end.

O God, your loving passion Is deeper than our pain, Look down, and in compassion Bring us to life again. When we are found despairing, When all seems lost to sin. We'll hear your voice declaring That love alone will win.

O God, when hate grows stronger, With fear to pave its way, The cry, 'Lord, how much longer?' With broken hearts we pray. In all that is dismaying In humankind's freewill, We'll join our voices, praying That love will triumph still.

O God, whose love will never Be silenced, stalled or stilled, Set us to work wherever There're bridges to rebuild. We'll take our life's vocation To make, like heav'n above, In this and every nation A kingdom built on love.

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9.15 am -1.15 pm

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Website: http://stjamescambridge.org.uk

Director of Music: Position vacant

Church & Community Activities

Choir practice: (Mon) Juniors 6.15pm, Seniors 6.45pm

Parents & Toddlers (Thurs) Wendy Lane, 244850 Brownies (7-10 yrs) QES Kerrie Thackray

email: 40thbrownies@gmail.com

Beavers (6-8 yrs) Brendan Murrill

07561 137493

Cubs (8-11 yrs) at QE School Stephen Harrison,

07548 765421

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DEADLINE FOR THE OCTOBER 2016 ISSUE of *CROSSPIECE*

Thursday 22nd September

The Editors welcome articles, news items and photographs for inclusion in the magazine. If possible these should be in digital form, photos and words in separate files. However we can accept typed or handwritten items and photographic prints.

TREE **SERVICES**

All types of tree work undertaken

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Available for home appointments





St James' Cambridge: Calendar for August — September 2016

Aug	gust

(There are no formal Sunday Schools or choir during August, but messy play activities have been planned for children)

3rd 10.15 am Eucharist at Dunstan Court

7th 11th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 10.00 am Sung Eucharist The Traidcraft stall will be open after both services

10th 10.15 am Eucharist

14th 12th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist 10.00 am Sung Eucharist 17th 10.15 am Eucharist

21st 13th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist 10.00 am Sung Eucharist 4th 10.15 am Eucharist

28th 14th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist 10.00 am Sung Eucharist Bank Holiday

31st 10.15 am Eucharist

September

3rd 10.15 am Coffee Morning

4th 15th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 10.00 am All Age Eucharist The Traidcraft stall will be open after both services

OUR REGULAR SERVICES

Sunday

8.00 a.m. Eucharist

10 a.m. Parish Eucharist (All-age Eucharist: 1st Sunday of the month)

Wednesday

10.15 a.m. Eucharist (first Weds of month: Dunstan Court)

Thursday and Friday

9.30 a.m. Morning Prayer

September (cont)

7^{th}	10.15 am	Eucharist at Dunstan Court
	8.00 pm	PCC Meeting
8^{th}	9.30 am	Morning Prayer
9 th	9.30 am	Morning Prayer
	12.30 pm	Meditation Group

11th 16th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday Schools 14th 10.15 am **Eucharist** 15th 9.30 am Morning Prayer Hinton Grange Care Home 2.30 pm Hymn Service 16th 9.30 am Morning Prayer Meditation Group 12.30 pm

18th 17th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist
 10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday Schools
 7.00 pm Licensing service for Revd. Steven Rothwell

21st 10.15 am Eucharist 22nd 9.30 am Morning Prayer 23rd 9.30 am Morning Prayer 12.30 pm Meditation Group

25th 18th SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

8.00 am Eucharist
10.00 am Sung Eucharist with Sunday
Schools
28th 10.15 am Eucharist
29th 9.30 am Morning Prayer
30th 9.30 am Morning Prayer
12.30 pm Meditation Group

October

19th

2nd HARVEST FESTIVAL

8.00 am Eucharist (BCP) 10.00 am All Age Eucharist The Traidcraft stall will be open after both services

12.30 pm Bring & Share Harvest Lunch